



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**  
**WASHINGTON, DC 20460**

OFFICE OF  
ADMINISTRATION  
AND RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT

Updated October 11, 2012

See changes highlighted in yellow

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)**  
**No. SOL-HQ-12-00033**  
**Attachment A**

**PURSUANT TO FAR 15.201(e)**

**INTRODUCTION**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is developing its requirements for portable satellite unit (PSU) support services. The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to gather information to assist EPA in formulating its requirements, and identify qualified vendors that are able to meet EPA's requirements.

**BACKGROUND**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Emergency Management in Washington, D.C., has a requirement to provide a single point of contact for continuing sustainment and support for Ku-Band Satellite Transmit and Receive Systems. This action will provide continuing sustainment operations and technical support for 56 existing Portable Satellite Units (PSUs). Location of the deployed terminals (PSUs) is both in the continental United States (CONUS) and outside the continental United States (OCONUS) Government sites.

As part of its national assets, the EPA has acquired and maintains 56 existing PSUs within 15 different geographic locations across the U.S. to maintain contact in emergency response situations. Providing high-speed Internet connection is essential for emergency response personnel and/or agencies. In addition, all PSUs and many Mobile Command Posts (MCPs) have Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone systems that provide incoming/outgoing voice connectivity via a toll-free telephone number.

**PLACE OF PERFORMANCE**

Bandwidth and maintenance services shall be provided throughout EPA's 10 geographical regions throughout the United States and its outlying areas, including Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Territories. The PSUs/MCPs are typically stored in 15 warehouses across the country, but may be deployed throughout the 50 United States and its Territories at any time.

**SCOPE**

**A. SERVICE**



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EPA requires Broadband IP satellite communications, with the following options:

- Additional PSUs may be added as needed and
- Increased bandwidth on a per unit/per month basis during times of emergency response.

**B. MAINTENANCE**

EPA requires the following types of maintenance services:

- 24-hour help desk support services to PSU end-users who encounter technical difficulties;
- Must have the ability to deploy to at least two (2) geographically different locations to provide sites service calls for any damaged or malfunctioning PSUs including all travel, parts, and labor; and
- Must be able to deploy to at least two (2) geographically different locations to provide emergency service calls for situations in which PSUs are deployed to one or more emergency response sites and require on-site servicing including travel, parts, and labor.

Must provide qualified technicians with current certifications and training that meet or exceed industry standards. EPA will consider providers that offer all services as well as teaming arrangements that are necessary to provide the services specified herein.

**C. TRANSITION PLAN**

Because this RFI involves EPA emergency response assets, the responses to this RFI must include a Transition Plan with timeframes to move the PSUs and VoIP services from the current provider's service to a new bandwidth service.

**D. NETWORK OPERATIONS CENTER REQUIREMENTS (NOC)**

EPA requires at least four separate satellites simultaneously to avoid any line-of-site blockage. At a minimum, the contractor shall provide the following performance metrics to ensure proper delivery of service:

- Service availability;
- Latency (maximum);
- Time to restore (minimum);
- Grade of service;
- Bit error rate;
- Jitter;
- Event notification and/or any other combination of proprietary or commercially offered;
- Performance metrics;
- Availability 99.95% Time the system is operationally available to the user;
- Ping Latency < 600ms Satellite propagation and circuit delays;
- Call Waiting Time < 5 sec Statistical sampling of VoIP calls;
- Maritime Communications;



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- Minimum mandatory requirement for Managed Network Services consists of Satellite bandwidth;
  - Earth station and teleport end-to-end network management and operations, service provisioning; and Dual redundant IP solutions.
  - Provider facilities must have backup power (UPS and/or Generator) to maintain uninterrupted service.
- Minimum requirement for design, engineering and maintenance support services is the ability to provide services identified below:
- Design and engineering;
  - Ongoing maintenance and operational support services;
  - Customer care and helpdesk support (24X7X365) more detail in next section; and Training, if required.

**E. TRANSITION PLAN**

EPA requires a detailed transition plan for maintaining satellite service through a transition from one contract to a new contract. It is unacceptable to have an entire blackout of service for any period of time during the transition. It is EPA's preference to have little or no lapse in service for any PSU. A phased approach with minimal and partial downtime for each region (minimum one PSU continuous and uninterrupted service for each region) is acceptable (Please see regional assets and location attachment) and must be described with extensive detail in the proposal. EPA's current Network Operations Center (NOC) is IsoTropic Networks, Inc., located in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. EPA's current service provided through several different earth-orbiting satellites for the purpose of redundancy and geographic advantages. EPA requires similar redundancy for this proposal. The contractor may propose to keep the current NOC or propose a new NOC. The contractor shall provide a proposal to describe all aspects of the transition. At a minimum, the plan should include the following:

- Identification of the proposed NOC including location, staffing description, and proposed satellites based on location of EPA assets (where will satellites in New England be pointed vs. satellites in Hawaii or Alaska);
- Decommissioning and commissioning schedule (as needed) for each of the satellite units. This should include any proposed hardware or software changes or requirements. Any associated costs with this item should be itemized in the cost portion of the proposal;
- Geographical staffing plan for any onsite work required during commissioning process. This should include any proposed subofficer locations and area(s) of responsibility (for commissioning, repairs, upgrades, replacements, or technical troubleshooting);
- A detailed timeline beginning with 12:01 am on last date of current contract, (estimated date of March 29, 2013) indicating all milestones (each PSU coming online) and locations for work as described above; and
- Any additional information or explanation as to how the vendor will meet the requirements of the contract transition.



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The contractor must address the above requirements even if they should choose to maintain the current NOC service.

**CONTRACTOR MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN RESPONSE TO RFI**

**1001: Dedicated Bandwidth Service. (2M x 2M)**

The contractor shall provide monthly bandwidth service to all PSUs and must include Committed Information Rate (CIR) and support video conferencing. Bandwidth service shall be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year without the need for PSU end users to notify the contractor or provider for access.

**1002: Dedicated Bandwidth Service. (4M x 4M)**

The contractor shall provide monthly bandwidth service to all PSUs and must include Committed Information Rate (CIR) and support video conferencing. Bandwidth service shall be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year without the need for PSU end users to notify the contractor or provider for access.

**1003: Individual Increased Bandwidth Service. (2048k x 1024k / unit/month)**

The contractor shall provide increased bandwidth at a rate of 2048 Kbps outbound x 1024 Kbps inbound on a per unit per month basis during times of emergency response or other necessary times as required by EPA and must include Committed Information Rate (CIR) and support video conferencing. The requirement for increased bandwidth will be initiated by PSU end users by call to the help desk identified in Item 1009. Upon receiving the request for increased bandwidth by a PSU end user, the contractor shall provide the required increased bandwidth for the stated PSU(s) within 24 hours and shall provide the increased bandwidth for 30 days. The contractor shall cease providing the increased bandwidth after 30 days. Increased bandwidth service under this Item may be required as few as 0 and as many as 264 times (22 PSUs x 12 months) per year.

**1004: Individual Increased Bandwidth Service. (2048k x 768k / unit/month)**

The contractor shall provide increased bandwidth at a rate of 2048 Kbps outbound x 768 Kbps inbound on a per unit per month basis during times of emergency response or other necessary times as required by EPA and must include Committed Information Rate (CIR) and support video conferencing. The requirement for increased bandwidth will be initiated by PSU end users by call to the help desk identified in Item 1009. Upon receiving the request for increased bandwidth by a PSU end user, the contractor shall provide the required increased bandwidth for the stated PSU(s) within 24 hours and shall provide the increased bandwidth for 30 days. The contractor shall cease providing the increased bandwidth after 30 days. Increased bandwidth service under this Item may be required as few as 0 and as many as 264 times (22 PSUs x 12 months) per year.

**1005: Individual Increased Bandwidth Service. (1544k x 768k / unit/month)**

The contractor shall provide increased bandwidth at a rate of 1544 Kbps outbound x 768 Kbps inbound on a per unit per month basis during times of emergency response or other necessary times as required by EPA and must include Committed Information Rate (CIR) and support



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video conferencing. The requirement for increased bandwidth will be initiated by PSU end users by call to the help desk identified in Item 1009. Upon receiving the request for increased bandwidth by a PSU end user, the contractor shall provide the required increased bandwidth for

the stated PSU(s) within 24 hours and shall provide the increased bandwidth for 30 days. The contractor shall cease providing the increased bandwidth after 30 days. Increased bandwidth service under this Item may be required as few as 0 and as many as 264 times (22 PSUs x 12 months) per year.

1006: Individual Increased Bandwidth Service. (1544k x 512k / unit/month)

The contractor shall provide increased bandwidth at a rate of 1544 Kbps outbound x 512 Kbps inbound on a per unit per month basis during times of emergency response or other necessary times as required by EPA and must include Committed Information Rate (CIR) and support video conferencing. The requirement for increased bandwidth will be initiated by PSU end users by call to the help desk identified in Item 1009. Upon receiving the request for increased bandwidth by a PSU end user, the contractor shall provide the required increased bandwidth for the stated PSU(s) within 24 hours and shall provide the increased bandwidth for 30 days. The contractor shall cease providing the increased bandwidth after 30 days. Increased bandwidth service under this Item may be required as few as 0 and as many as 264 times (22 PSUs x 12 months) per year.

1007: Individual Increased Bandwidth Service. (1024k x 512k / unit/month)

The contractor shall provide increased bandwidth at a rate of 1024 Kbps outbound x 512 Kbps inbound on a per unit per month basis during times of emergency response or other necessary times as required by EPA and must include Committed Information Rate (CIR) and support video conferencing. The requirement for increased bandwidth will be initiated by PSU end users by call to the help desk identified in Item 1009. Upon receiving the request for increased bandwidth by a PSU end user, the contractor shall provide the required increased bandwidth for the stated PSU(s) within 24 hours and shall provide the increased bandwidth for 30 days. The contractor shall cease providing the increased bandwidth after 30 days. Increased bandwidth service under this Item may be required as few as 0 and as many as 264 times (22 PSUs x 12 months) per year.

1008: Individual Increased Bandwidth Service. (1024k x 256k / unit/month)

The contractor shall provide increased bandwidth at a rate of 1024 Kbps outbound x 256 Kbps inbound on a per unit per month basis during times of emergency response or other necessary times as required by EPA and must include Committed Information Rate (CIR) and support video conferencing. The requirement for increased bandwidth will be initiated by PSU end users by call to the help desk identified in Item 1009. Upon receiving the request for increased bandwidth by a PSU end user, the contractor shall provide the required increased bandwidth for the stated PSU(s) within 24 hours and shall provide the increased bandwidth for 30 days. The contractor shall cease providing the increased bandwidth after 30 days. Increased bandwidth service under this Item may be required as few as 0 and as many as 264 times (22 PSUs x 12 months) per year.

1009: Help Desk Support. (FFP per month)



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The contractor shall provide help desk support to troubleshoot problems for PSU end users that may encounter technical difficulties with a unit(s). The help desk shall be available to accept cases by telephone from PSU end users for multiple types of technical issues. The contractor's

help desk shall return calls from end users in less than two (2) hours from the time of an end user's call. The contractor's help desk need not be live 24 hours a day available, however, because technical issues may arise at times of emergency situations from the field at any time of day, response from the contractor's help desk to cases from EPA personnel may be required 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Technical issues may require more than one call if further analysis or diagnostics are required and as a result, the contractor shall have a method for tracking cases to ensure that case information is not lost between calls. The contractor's help desk may be an existing company help desk so long as PSU end users can receive the information needed to resolve technical issues from support help desk personnel they contact.

**1010: Repairs, Purchase, Replacements and Upgrades. (T&M)**

In the event of serious malfunction to a PSU(s) that cannot be rectified through the troubleshooting process between the PSU end user and the help desk, the Government and offeror may determine that the PSU(s) require(s) significant repairs, replacements and/or upgrades. To the extent feasible, prior to any significant repair, replacement or upgrade, the contractor shall contact the Project Officer or designated regional point of contact, describe the identified work to be performed, and provide a cost estimate of the time and materials needed to complete the work. The designated POC will approve the contractor's proposed work in part or in whole and authorize the contractor to proceed. The contractor shall then travel to the location of the PSU(s) and complete all necessary repairs, replacements, and/or in accordance with the approved timeline. This Item also includes the purchase and installation of new PSUs and additional peripheral equipment that enhances or adds to the communication functionality of the PSU and/or MCP.

**1011: Emergency Service. (T&M with NTE total) 1011: *Emergency Service.* (T&M with NTE total)**

As directed by the PO, the contractor shall provide emergency service to repair damaged or malfunctioning PSUs deployed to an incident(s) which may require servicing after transit. The Project Officer or designated regional POC will initiate the requirement for emergency service by phone call to the contractor through the help desk. Upon receiving authorization from the Project Officer or his designee, the contractor shall dispatch the appropriate service technician(s) to the location(s) identified by the Project Officer to arrive and provide technical support on-site within 48 hours, or in accordance with the approved timeline, to any location(s) in the United States and its outlying areas.

**1012: Travel. (Cost Reimbursable with NTE total)**

Travel by the contractor is required in connection with Items **1010** and Item 1011. The contractor shall perform and invoice for all travel under Item 1012. The contractor will be reimbursed for all allowable travel costs incurred during performance of this effort in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) for travel in the continental United States (CONUS),





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and Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) for travel outside the continental United States (OCNUS), currently in effect on date of travel.

**1013: VoIP Configuration and Service. (FFP per month)**

The contractor shall provide Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone services and number portability. The contractor must maintain current numbering plan. All VoIP services must be managed and maintained by the contractor.

**DELIVERABLES**

The contractor shall submit a report detailing bandwidth usage and maintenance services performed during the specified period. At a minimum, the report shall include the following:

- Total quarterly broadband usage per unit;
- Total quarterly increased broadband usage per unit;
- Total number of help desk cases per month;
- All repairs/replacements/upgrades to PSUs during the quarter including total cost;
- All on site technical support performed during the quarter; and
- A brief description of commercial updates, advancements and new technologies in the telecommunications industry related to portable satellite communications.

**DISCLAIMER**

This Request For Information (RFI) is issued solely for information and planning purposes and does not constitute a solicitation. In accordance with FAR 15.201(e), the Government does not presently intend to award a contract, but wants to obtain price, delivery, and other market research for planning purposes. Responses to this notice are not offers and cannot be accepted by the Government to form a binding contract. Respondents are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this RFI.

Responses to this RFI will not be returned. Respondents will not be notified of the result of the review.

**HOW TO RESPOND**

Please submit your response using the attached format entitled "Capability Statement" as provided. Responses shall demonstrate contractors' ability to meet the requirements in accordance with Attachment A. Questions due by October 5, 2012 at 10:00 A.M. EST. Send responses to this RFI via email to Marshand Boone at boone.marshand@epa.gov by Thursday, October 25, 2011, at 10:00 A.M. EST.